

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action,¹ the Examiner rejected claims 1-28 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Satoru et al. (Japanese Publication 06-244091) (“Satoru”).

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1, 9, 14, 19, 24, 28, and 35 to more appropriately define the present invention. Claims 1-35 are currently pending, of which claims 29-34 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-28 and 35 are currently presented for examination.

At the outset, Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to recite, in part, “a conducting member formed so as to replace a portion of the insulating film...wherein one of the conductive thin film and the conductive support has a second opening in which the conducting member is formed, the second opening being positioned in a region excluding the plurality of first openings.” Support for the amendment may be found in the Specification, for example, at page 17, lines 1-16, as well as in Figs. 1B, 5F, and 6, among other places.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Satoru. In order to properly establish that Satoru anticipates Applicants’ claimed invention under 35 U.S.C. § 102, each and every element of each of the claims in issue must be found, either expressly described or under principles of inherency, in that single reference. Furthermore, “[t]he identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim.” See

¹ The Office Action may contain statements characterizing the related art, case law, and claims. Regardless of whether any such statements are specifically identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statements in the Office Action.

M.P.E.P. § 2131, quoting *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1126, 1236, 9

U.S.P.Q.2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Satoru fails to teach each and every element of amended claim 1. In particular, Satoru does not teach, at least, the claimed “one of the conductive thin film and the conductive support has a second opening in which the conducting member is formed, the second opening being positioned in a region excluding the plurality of first openings,” as recited in amended claim 1. Satoru teaches, in Figs. 1 and 2, a transparency mask, including a thin film-like Si substrate 3, a first SiO₂ film 2, a Si housing 1F, and a tungsten film 12. However, Satoru does not teach any opening, either in the Si substrate 3 or the Si housing 1F, except the mask pattern formed in the center portion of the Si substrate 3. Accordingly, Satoru cannot teach that the tungsten film 12 is formed in such an opening. Therefore, the alleged tungsten film 12 of Satoru fails to teach the claimed “one of the conductive thin film and the conductive support has a second opening in which the conducting member is formed, the second opening being positioned in a region excluding the plurality of first openings.”

Moreover, Satoru also does not teach the claimed stencil mask including “a conducting member formed so as to replace a portion of the insulating film,” as recited in amended claim 1. The Examiner contends that the tungsten film 12, illustrated in Fig. 2 of Satoru, discloses the claimed “conducting member” of claim 1. The Examiner further argues that the tungsten film 12 is “formed through the insulating film 2 and placed on the rear-face 3B and also covers the mask side face 10, thus, electrically connects the conductive support 1F to the conductive thin film 3.” Final Office Action at page 12. The tungsten film 12 of Satoru, however, does not replace a portion of the

SiO₂ film 2. Rather, the tungsten film 12, as illustrated in Fig. 2 of Satoru, is applied over the entire structure including the SiO₂ film 2 disposed between the Si substrate 3 and the Si housing 1F. Thus, the tungsten film 12 of Satoru does not teach the claimed “conducting member formed so as to replace a portion of the insulating film.”

Thus, amended claim 1 is allowable over Satoru, and claims 2-8 are also allowable over Satoru at least due to their dependence from claim 1.

Regarding independent claims 9, 14, 19, 24, 28, and 35, Applicants note that claim 9 has been amended to recite “a conductive thin film having an *inside* region and an *outside* region,” and “a third opening *in the outside region*.” (emphases added) In addition, similar changes have been made to independent claims 14, 19, 24, 28, and 35. In light of such amendments, Applicants submit that Satoru fails to disclose, at least, the claimed “opening in the outside region.”

The Examiner has already acknowledged that Satoru’s stencil mask comprises “a first region (middle region) and a second region (peripheral region).” See Final Office Action at page 4, line 4, and page 5, line 11, for example. The Examiner, however, alleges that Satoru’s alleged opening 7 is in the second region, which corresponds to the peripheral region. See Final Office Action at page 4, lines 10-11. This is not correct. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, Satoru’s opening 7 is located in the middle region, and thus cannot teach the claimed “opening in the outside region,” as recited in amended claim 9. Indeed, Satoru does not appear to suggest any opening in the outside region of the mask.

Therefore, amended independent claims 9, 14, 19, 24, 28, and 35 are allowable over Satoru, and dependent claims 10-13, 15-18, 20-23, and 25-27 are also allowable over Satoru at least due to their corresponding dependence from allowable base claims 9, 14, 19, and 24.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants request reconsideration of the application and withdrawal of the rejection. Pending claims 1-28 and 35 are in condition for allowance, and Applicants request a favorable action.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

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By: 
Selah C. Park
Reg. No. 57,127